MARVEL KNIGHTS®
MARVEL PSR 8
SPIDER-MAN
VENOMOUS
PART 4

PREVIOUSLY IN SPIDER-MAN

"VENOMOUS"
PART IV OF IV

After his Aunt May is violently kidnapped by a mysterious assailant, Peter Parker watches his world unravel at a furious pace. Old enemies crawl out of the woodwork like smoke pouring from a three-alarm fire. The Daily Bugle offers a five million dollar reward for Spider-Man's secret identity--turning Manhattanites into either Spider-Man foes or impersonators. The X-Men's Marvel Girl tells Peter that his Aunt May has likely been murdered. And on the home front, Peter's wife, Mary Jane, tells him that they're bankrupt.

Now, amid a night of refuge from the carnage, Peter is attacked at his high school reunion by his long-time foe, the symbiote named Venom. After Venom murders several of Peter's classmates, Peter realizes that something is dramatically different about the creature...that he might not be dealing with exactly who he thinks he is...

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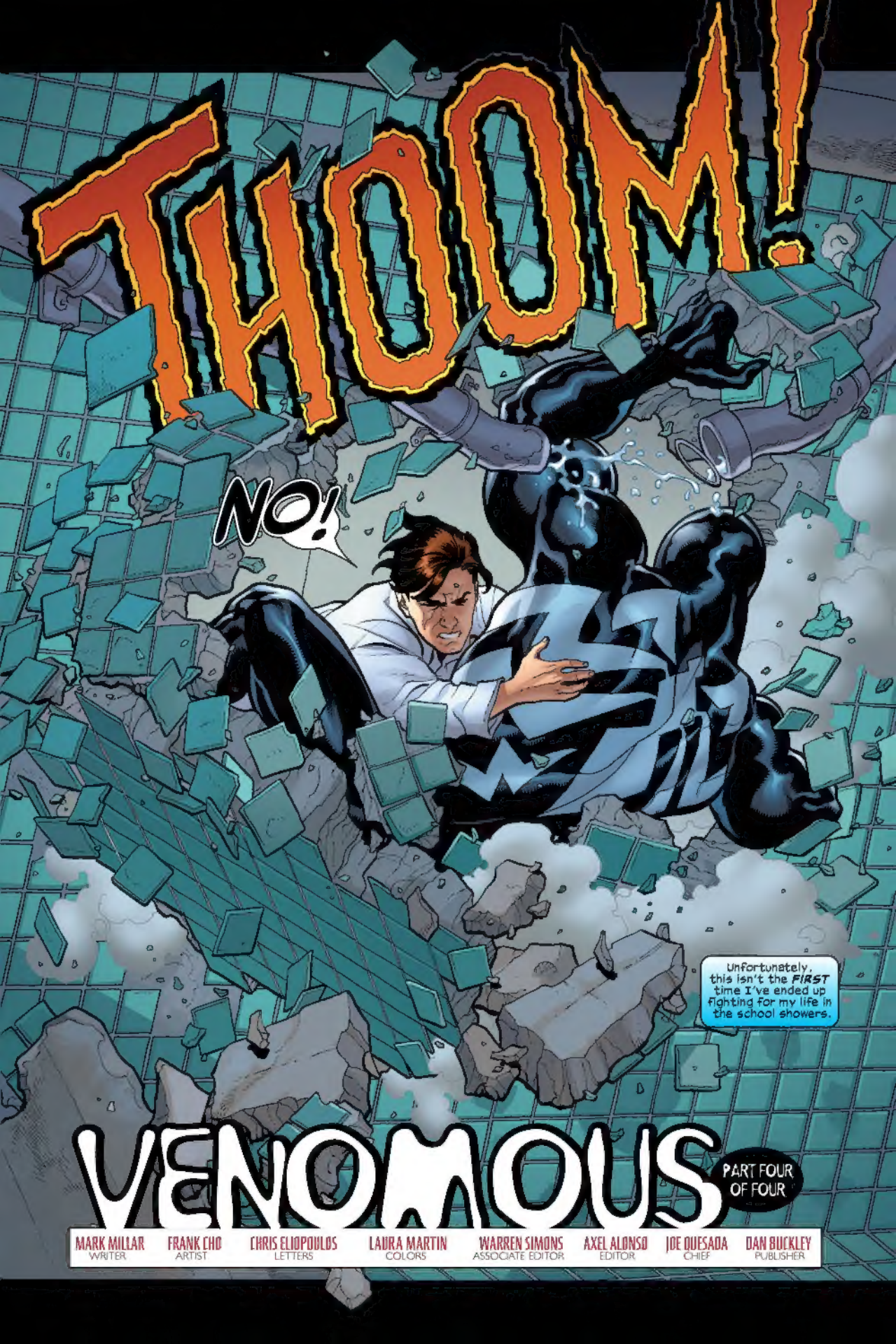
THOOM!
NO!
Unfortunately, this isn't the FIRST time I've ended up fighting for my life in the school showers.
VENOMOUS
PART FOUR OF FOUR
MARK MILLAR WRITER
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Twice a week, this used to happen after gym class, regular as clockwork, but Venom's a PIECE OF CAKE after Flash Thompson and his ugly twelve apostles.
Except, of course, this isn't VENOM.
HANDS OFFA ME, MAN!
This is a gangster's kid named ANGELO FORTUNATO, and he just told me his Dad BOUGHT him the Symbiote at a SUPER-VILLAIN AUCTION.
UNNH!
OKAY, YOU LITTLE PUNK! YOU WANNA DO THIS LET'S DO IT!
The OLD Venom would NEVER have crashed my high school reunion and murdered an innocent person.
The old Venom had a working set of MORALS in his own STRANGE and CONVOLUTED WAY.

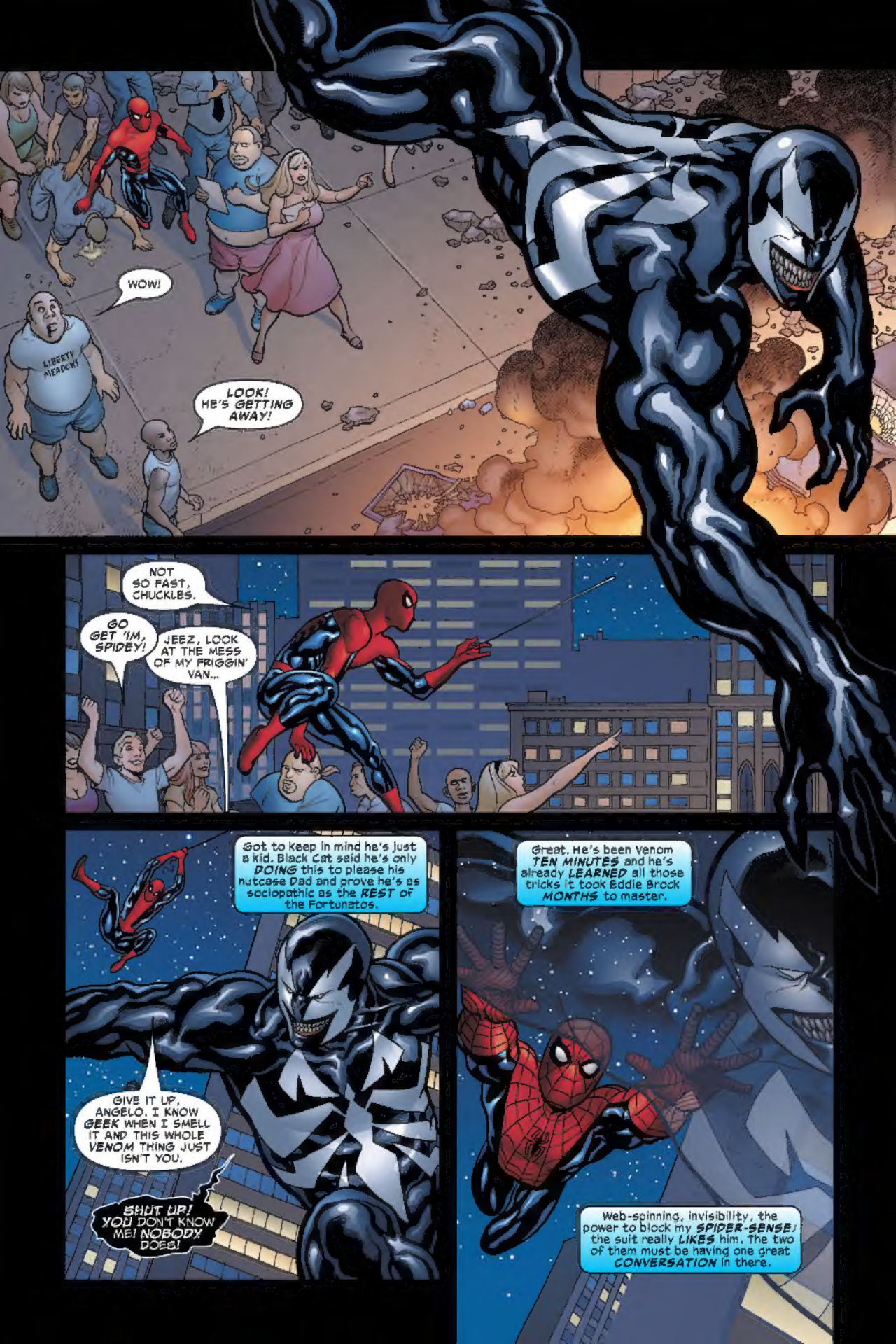
WELCOME
CLASS of 19
EXIT
ARE YOU TELLING ME THIS LINE ACTUALLY WORKS SOMETIMES? THAT SOME POOR WOMEN HAVE ACTUALLY FALLEN FOR THIS GARBAGE?
IT'S THE TRUTH, MARY JANE, AND I'M ONLY TELLING YOU BECAUSE YOU LOOK LIKE THE KINDA GIRL THAT CAN KEEP A SECRET. YOU KNOW HOW MUCH THE BUGLE'S OFFERING FOR THIS INFORMATION?
I'M SPIDER-MAN, BABY. THIS IS MY GIFT, THIS IS MY CURSE. YOU COME BACK TO MY PLACE AND I'LL EVEN SHOW YOU THE OLD RED AND BLUE PAJAMAS.
SORRY, SPIDEY, BUT I'M ALREADY MARRIED TO THE HULK AND YOU KNOW HOW BIG AND CRANKY HE GETS WHEN SOMEONE HITS ON HIS GIRL.
OH MY GOD!
OKAY, NOW I JUST FEEL STUPID...
LIZ! HIT THE FIRE ALARM! WE NEED TO EVACUATE THE BUILDING!!
Good girl, MJ. Keep a clear head and get everybody out of here. I'll do what I can to take the fight OUTSIDE.
PUCKER UP, SWEETIE! HERE'S A BIG, JUICY, WET ONE FROM YOUR DEAR, OLD AUNT SPIDEY!

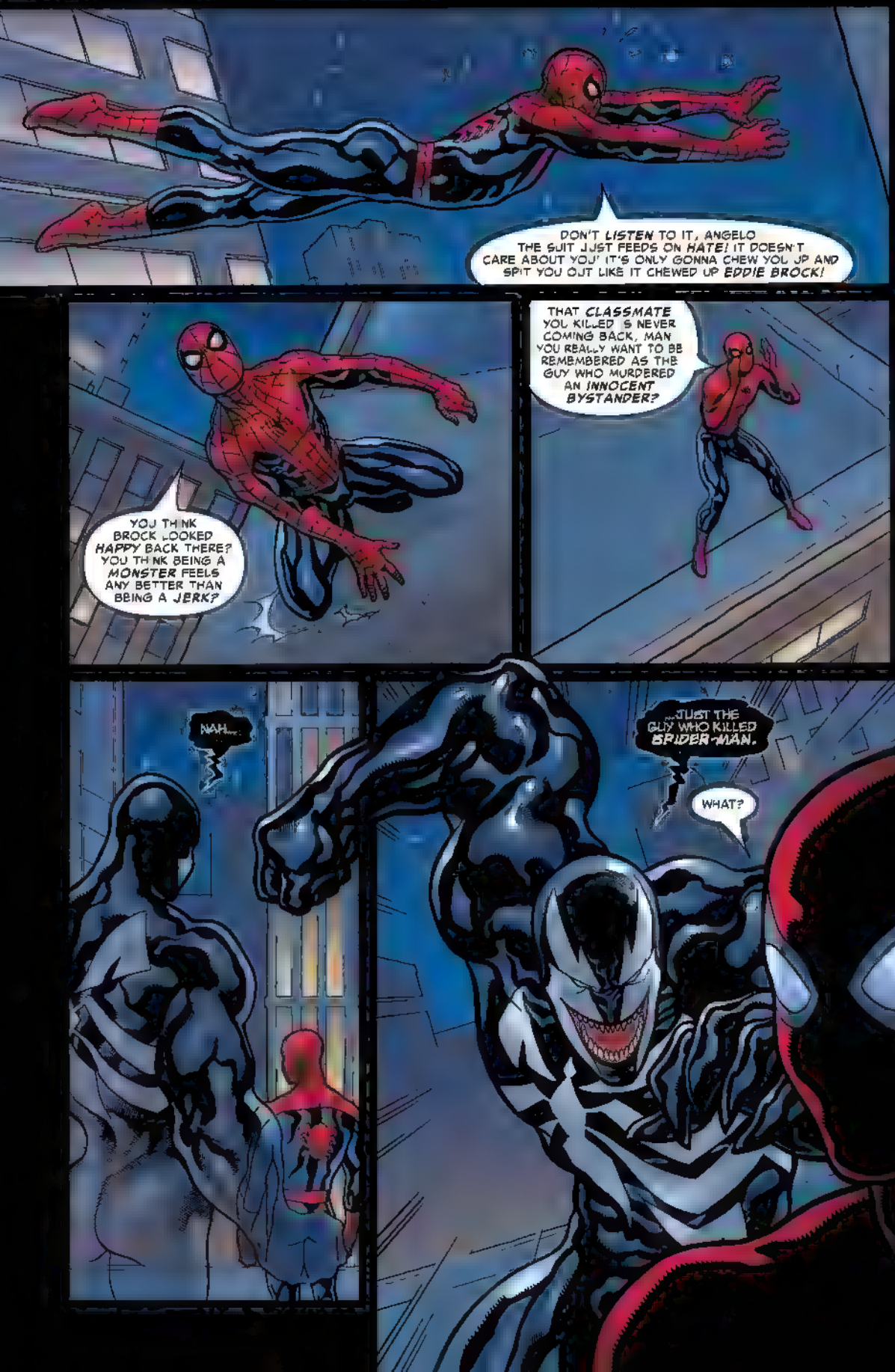
ARE YOU KIDDING? IT'S LIKE YOU'RE MOVING IN SLOW MOTION OR SOMETHING, SPIDER-MAN...
He's learning FAST. Giving in to THE SYMBIOTE'S instincts and just fighting on AUTOPILOT here.
AAAGGHH!
Still, at least this gets the fight OUTSIDE.
C'MON, GUYS. MOVE! MOVE! YOU KNOW THE DRILL IF THERE'S A SUPER-VILLAIN IN A PUBLIC BUILDING!
WHY DOES THIS KEEP HAPPENING TO US, MJ? WHY DO THESE FREAKS KEEP FOLLOWING US AROUND?
This is insane. Fortunato's youngest couldn't have weighed more than a hundred and twenty, but this guy's TWICE the size of the old Venom. How's that even POSSIBLE?

Is he really packing that much HATE?
WHOA!
YOU'RE A REAL DISAPPOINTMENT, YOU KNOW THAT, ANGELO?
A HUNDRED MILLION DOLLARS ON AN ALIEN SUIT AND YOU'RE STILL A FREAKIN' LOSER.
YOUR DAD MUST BE REALLY PROUD.
Spider-sense kicks in with a three-sixty snapshot:
McSWIGGIN GAS
Pekinese-yapping...
...people-screaming...
...undercover cop holding a standard-issue and wondering whether or not to FIRE...
...not to mention the GAS TRUCK.
GET OUTTA THE WAY!

EXCUSE ME, MA'AM, BUT YOU FORGOT YOUR DOG.
This is dangerous. Too many people around. A nerd that's suddenly as strong as The Thing just has too much to PROVE.
I have to close him down FAST.
DUDE, I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU'RE JUST A HIGH SCHOOL TEACHER!
I ALWAYS THOUGHT YOU'D BE SOMETHING COOL LIKE A COP OR A NAVY SEAL. BUT YOU'RE NOTHING UNDER THAT MASK!
MY DOORMAN PROBABLY MAKES MORE MONEY THAN YOU DO!
A clock ticks, the crowd inhales, the driver looks about five feet ten, the passenger maybe a little shorter...

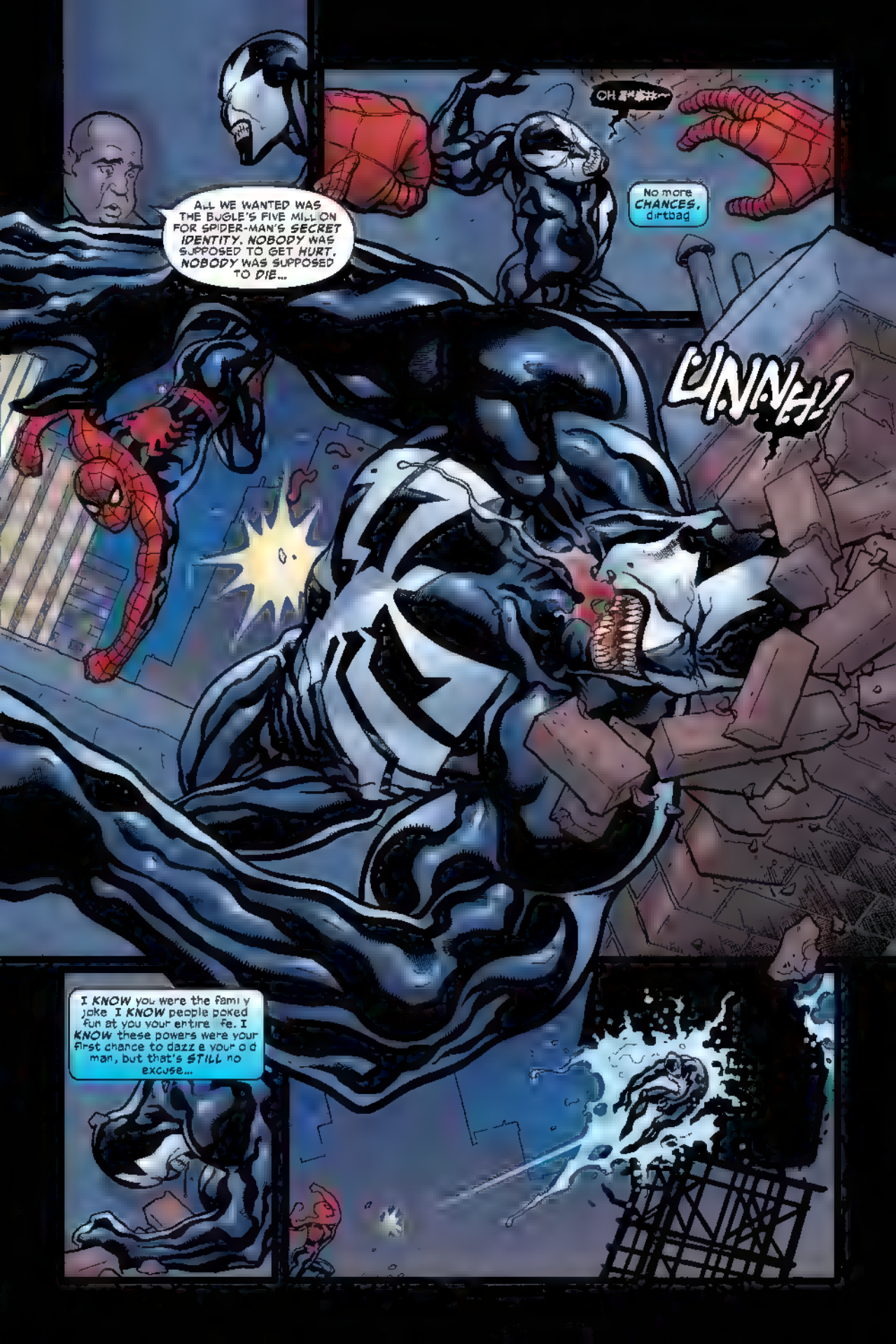
FRAGILE
Time to show this punk who he's DEALING with here.


WOW!
LIBERTY MEADOW!
LOOK! HE'S GETTING AWAY!
NOT SO FAST, CHUCKLES.
GO GET 'IM, SPIDEY!
JEEZ, LOOK AT THE MESS OF MY FRIGGIN' VAN...
Got to keep in mind he's just a kid. Black Cat said he's only DOING this to please his nutcase Dad and prove he's as sociopathic as the REST of the Fortunatos.
GIVE IT UP, ANGELO. I KNOW GEEK WHEN I SMELL IT AND THIS WHOLE VENOM THING JUST ISN'T YOU.
SHUT UP! YOU DON'T KNOW ME! NOBODY DOES!
Great. He's been Venom TEN MINUTES and he's already LEARNED all those tricks it took Eddie Brock MONTHS to master.
Web-spinning, invisibility, the power to block my SPIDER-SENSE; the suit really LIKES him. The two of them must be having one great CONVERSATION in there.


DON'T LISTEN TO IT, ANGELO THE SUIT JUST FEEDS ON HATE! IT DOESN'T CARE ABOUT YOU! IT'S ONLY GONNA CHEW YOU UP AND SPIT YOU OUT LIKE IT CHEWED UP EDDIE BROCK!
YOU THINK BROCK LOOKED HAPPY BACK THERE? YOU THINK BEING A MONSTER FEELS ANY BETTER THAN BEING A JERK?
THAT CLASSMATE YOU KILLED IS NEVER COMING BACK, MAN. YOU REALLY WANT TO BE REMEMBERED AS THE GUY WHO MURDERED AN INNOCENT BYSTANDER?
NAH...
...JUST THE GUY WHO KILLED SPIDER-MAN.
WHAT?

CHUUK!

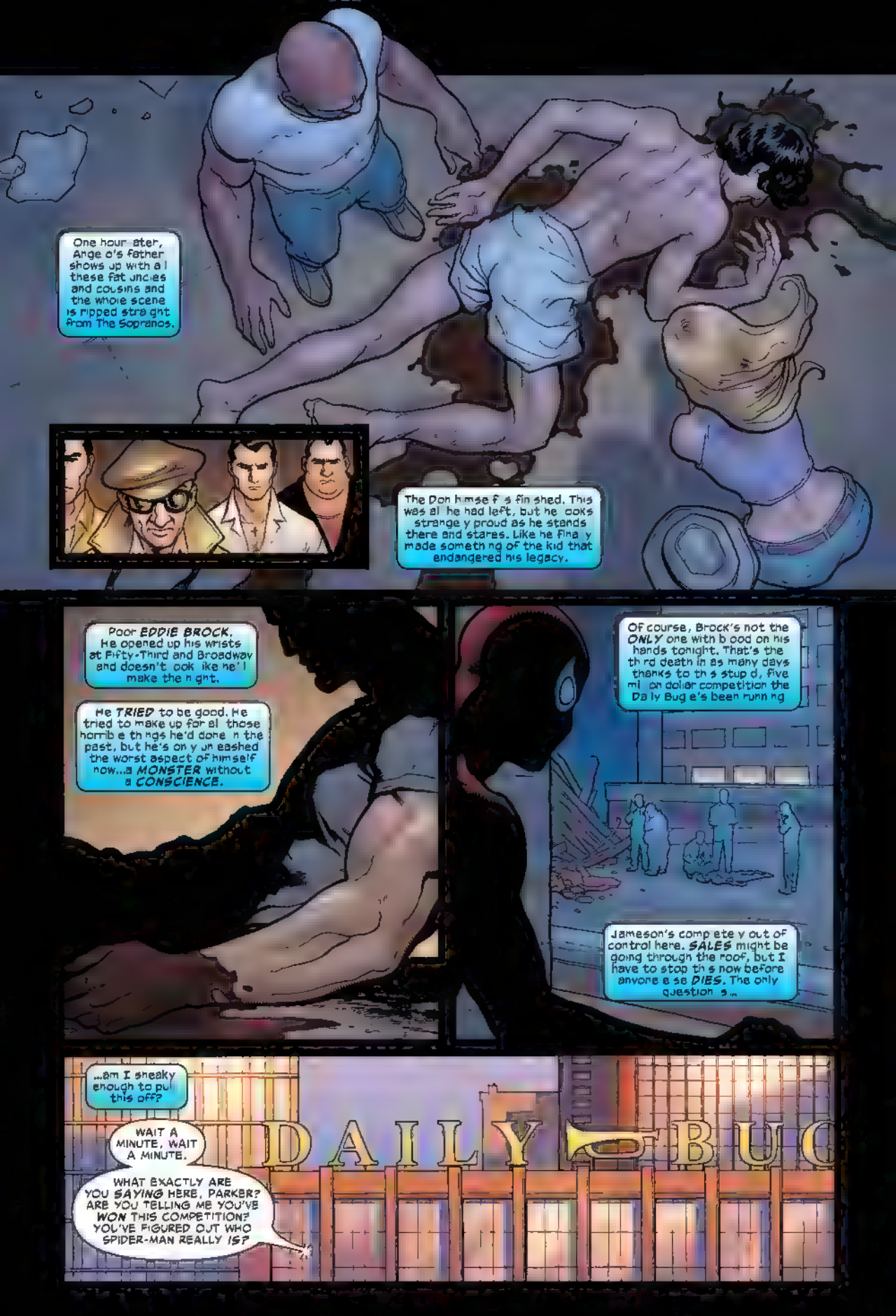
OH MY GOD.
I DID IT. I KILLED HIM.
ALL THOSE BIG GUYS OUT THERE... GREEN GOBLIN, DOCTOR DOOM, DOCTOR OCTOPUS AND ALL THOSE CLOWNS... I JUST DID WHAT NONE OF THEM COULD DO... EVEN WHEN THEY ALL GANGED UP.
AND YOU KNOW WHAT? IT WASN'T EVEN THAT DIFFICULT.
I KILLED HIM FOR YOU, DAD. YOU HEAR ME?
ANGELO FORTUNATO JUST KILLED SPIDER-MAN!
HE ..HE SAID THIS WOULDN'T HAPPEN. THIS IS INSANE. HE... HE PROMISED THERE WOULDN'T BE ANY RISK...
WHAT? WHO THE HELL ARE YOU?

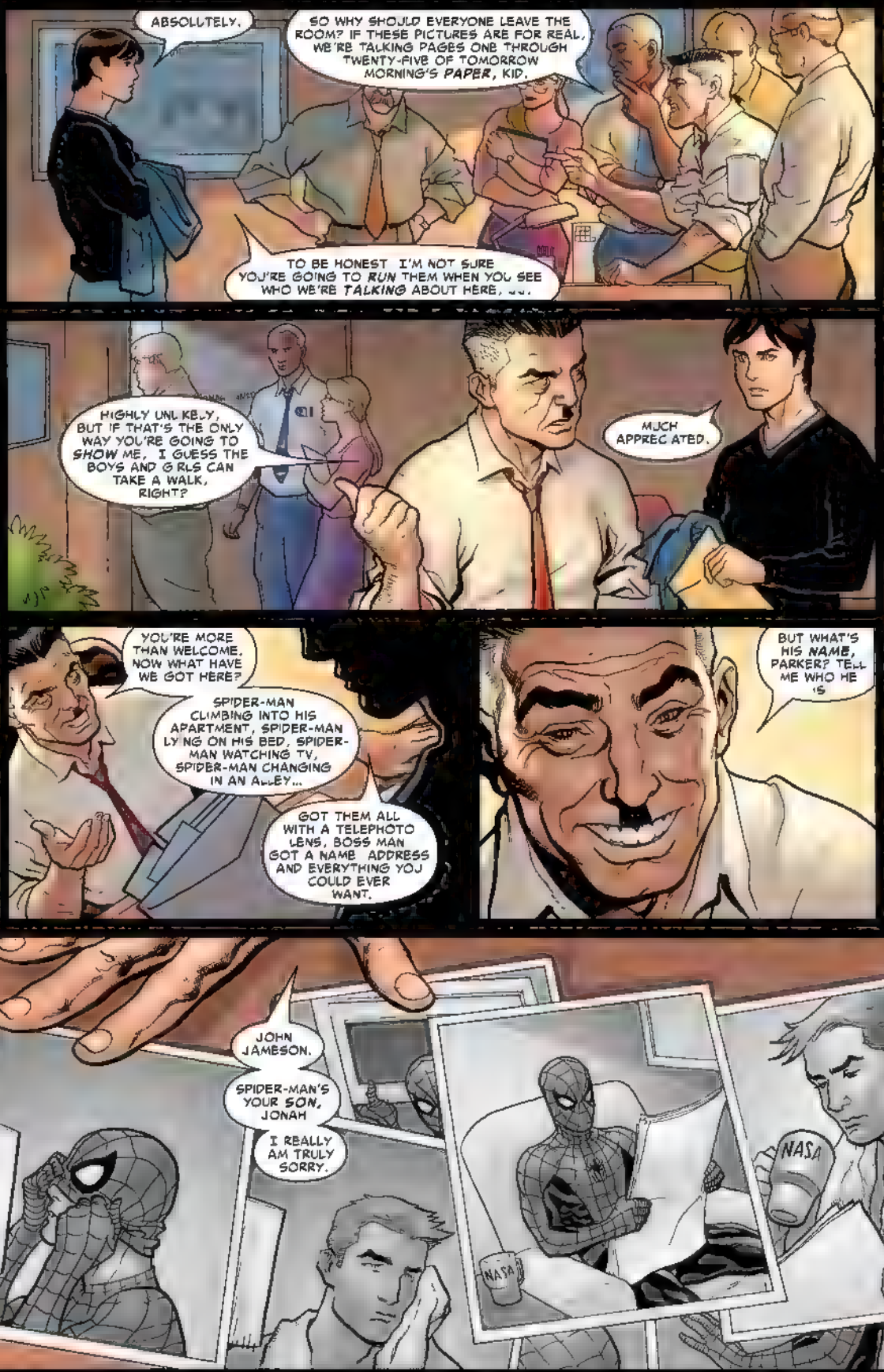

OH F*#$!
No more CHANCES, dirtbag
ALL WE WANTED WAS THE BUGLE'S FIVE MILLION FOR SPIDER-MAN'S SECRET IDENTITY. NOBODY WAS SUPPOSED TO GET HURT. NOBODY WAS SUPPOSED TO DIE...
UNNH!
I KNOW you were the family joke. I KNOW people poked fun at you your entire life. I KNOW these powers were your first chance to dazzle your old man, but that's STILL no excuse...

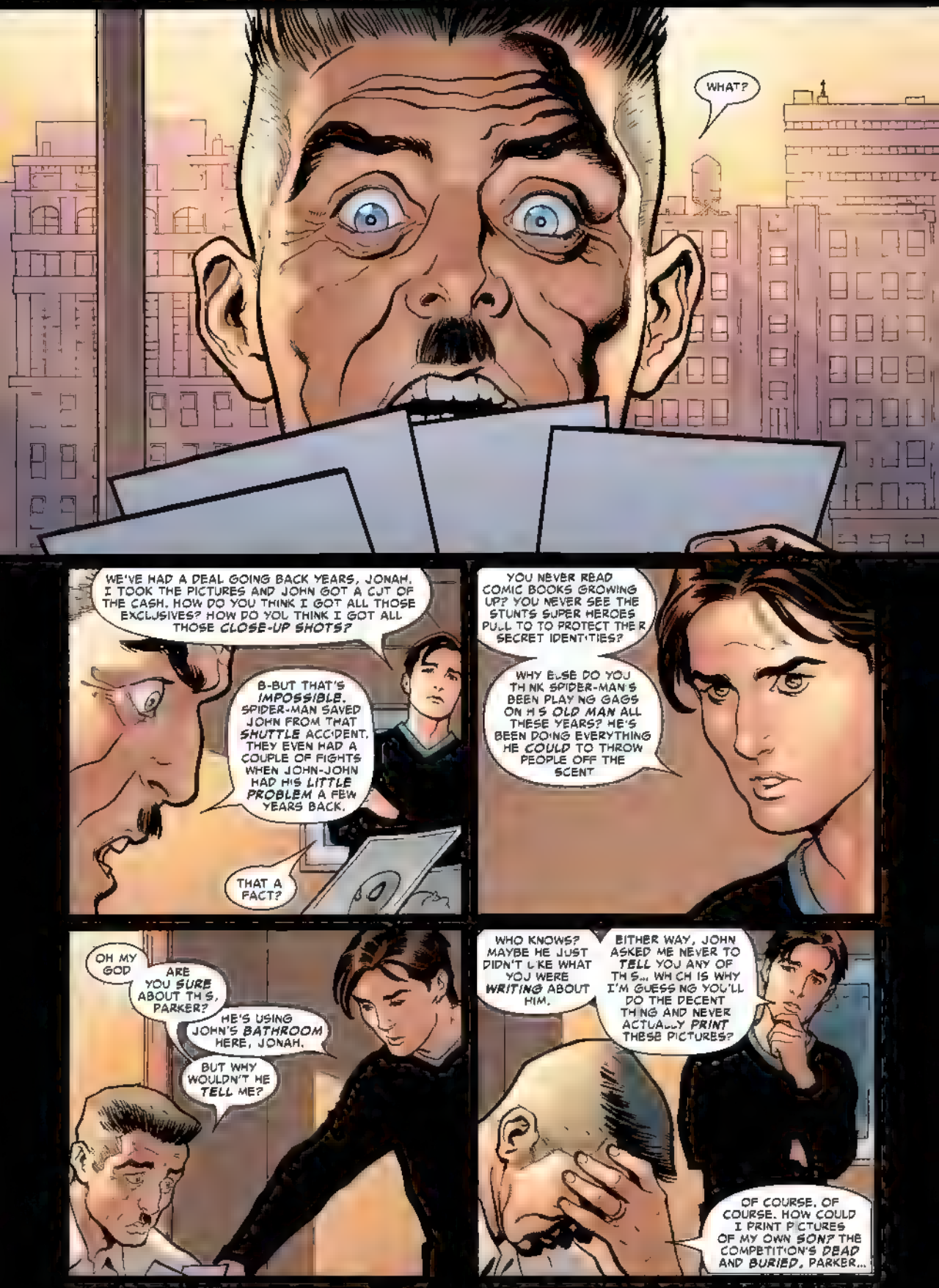
You weren t bu l ed any more than I was, Ange o
You weren't punched or k cked or spat upon any more than me
You were given GREAT POWERS and you used them to KILL peop e, you ittle freak
So Ike I sa d--
No more CHANCES.
PLEASE! DON'T HIT ME ANYMORE! I GIVE UP! I GIVE UP!
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? YOU'RE TWICE AS STRONG AS HE IS!
TAKE HIM DOWN, ANGELO! ONE PUNCH FROM YOU COULD TAKE THIS INSECT'S HEAD OFF!
URFF!
ANGELO! KEEP IT TOGETHER!
YOUR FEAR'S SHAKING US APART!
STAY FOCUSED. WE CAN FINISH THIS!

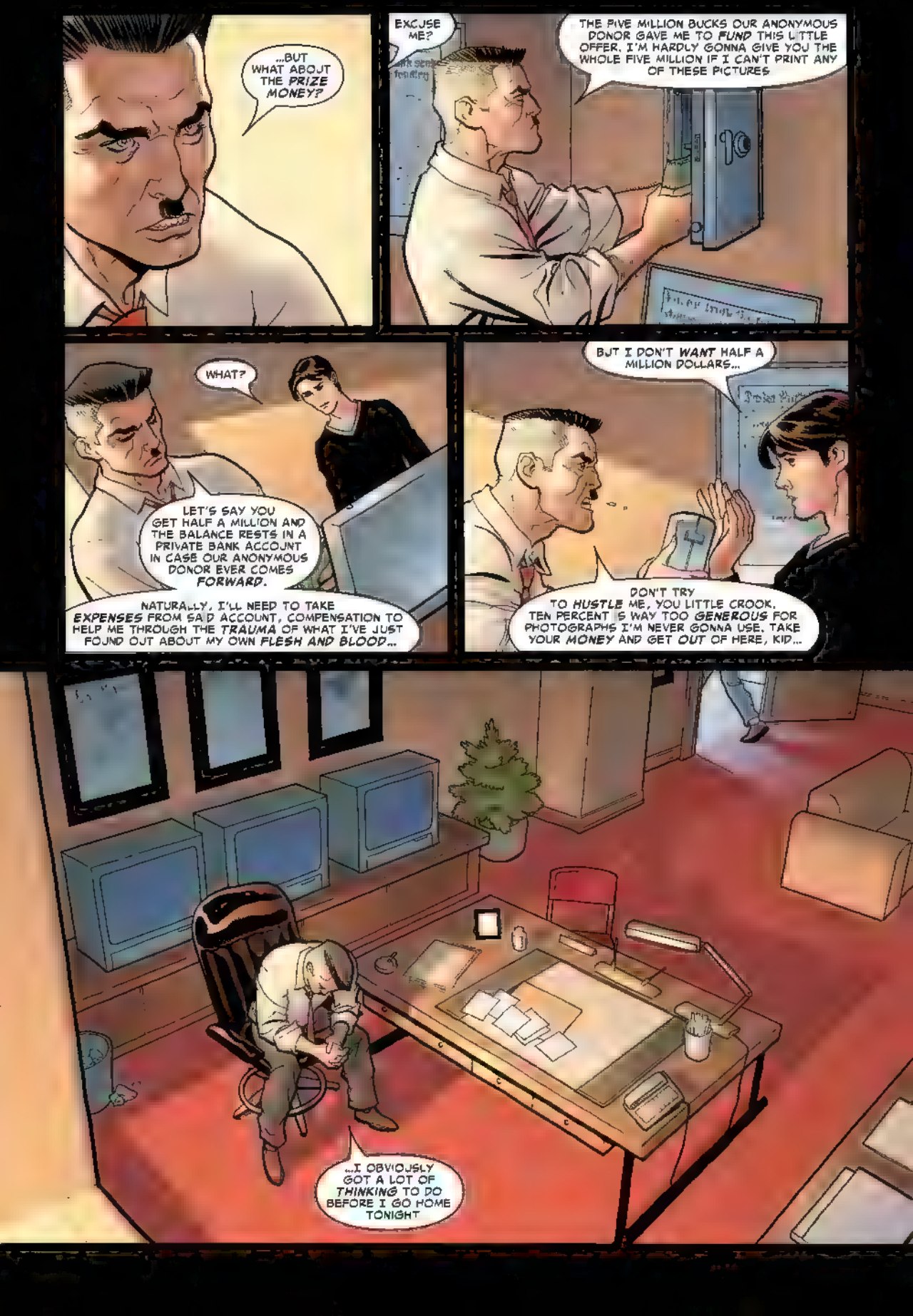
STAY FOCUSED, ANGELO! FIGHT BACK, YOU LITTLE RUNT! FIGHT BACK OR I'LL KILL YOU MYSELF!
I CAN'T. HE'S TOO GOOD AT THIS. WHAT CHANCE DOES SOMEONE LIKE ME HAVE AGAINST SPIDER-MAN, FOR GOD'S SAKE? I SHOULD NEVER HAVE LISTENED TO YOU!
ANGELO! WHAT ARE YOU THINKING? DO YOU REALIZE HOW MUCH THIS IS GOING TO DISAPPOINT YOUR FATHER?
DAD'S BEEN DISAPPOINTED IN ME SINCE THE SECOND I WAS BORN, MAN. THIS IS ALL JUST BUSINESS AS USUAL.
SIGH.
YOU KNOW YOUR PROBLEM, ANGELO...?
...YOU JUST DON'T HAVE ENOUGH VENOM!
JEEZUS! WHERE ARE YOU GOING?
TO FIND SOMEONE ELSE. WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE?
YOU'RE EVEN MORE PATHETIC THAN EDDIE BROCK ENDED UP.
Oh my God

ANGELO! GO LIMP!
NO!
Oh no...
Only one shooter WORKING after the fight and the idiot used up all my WEB-FLUID.
ANGELO!!
MARY, MOTHER OF GOD...
MELONS


One hour later, Angelo's father shows up with all these fat uncles and cousins and the whole scene is ripped straight from The Sopranos.
The Don himself is finished. This was all he had left, but he looks strangely proud as he stands there and stares. Like he finally made something of the kid that endangered his legacy.
Poor EDDIE BROCK. He opened up his wrists at Fifty-Third and Broadway and doesn't look like he'll make the night.
He TRIED to be good. He tried to make up for all those horrible things he'd done in the past, but he's only unleashed the worst aspect of himself now...a MONSTER without a CONSCIENCE.
Of course, Brock's not the ONLY one with blood on his hands tonight. That's the third death in as many days thanks to this stupid, five million dollar competition the Daily Bugle's been running.
Jameson's completely out of control here. SALES might be going through the roof, but I have to stop this now before anyone else DIES. The only question is...
...am I sneaky enough to pull this off?
WAIT A MINUTE, WAIT A MINUTE.
WHAT EXACTLY ARE YOU SAYING HERE, PARKER? ARE YOU TELLING ME YOU'VE WON THIS COMPETITION? YOU'VE FIGURED OUT WHO SPIDER-MAN REALLY IS?
DAILY BUG


ABSOLUTELY.
SO WHY SHOULD EVERYONE LEAVE THE ROOM? IF THESE PICTURES ARE FOR REAL, WE'RE TALKING PAGES ONE THROUGH TWENTY-FIVE OF TOMORROW MORNING'S PAPER, KID.
TO BE HONEST, I'M NOT SURE YOU'RE GOING TO RUN THEM WHEN YOU SEE WHO WE'RE TALKING ABOUT HERE, JJ.
HIGHLY UNLIKELY, BUT IF THAT'S THE ONLY WAY YOU'RE GOING TO SHOW ME, I GUESS THE BOYS AND GIRLS CAN TAKE A WALK, RIGHT?
MUCH APPRECIATED.
YOU'RE MORE THAN WELCOME. NOW WHAT HAVE WE GOT HERE?
SPIDER-MAN CLIMBING INTO HIS APARTMENT, SPIDER-MAN LYING ON HIS BED, SPIDER-MAN WATCHING TV, SPIDER-MAN CHANGING IN AN ALLEY...
GOT THEM ALL WITH A TELEPHOTO LENS, BOSS MAN GOT A NAME, ADDRESS AND EVERYTHING YOU COULD EVER WANT.
BUT WHAT'S HIS NAME, PARKER? TELL ME WHO HE IS
JOHN JAMESON.
SPIDER-MAN'S YOUR SON, JONAH
I REALLY AM TRULY SORRY.
NASA
NASA

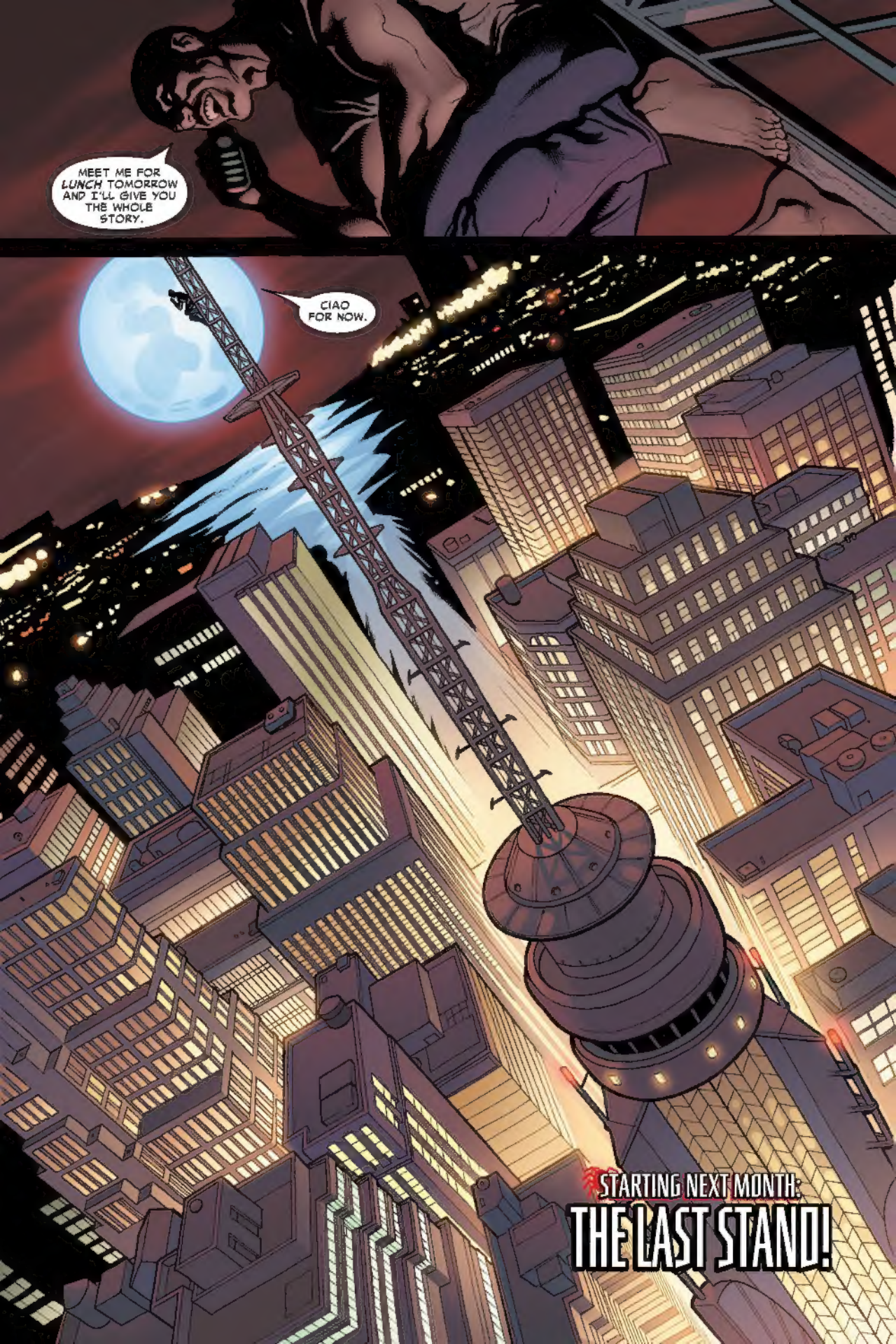

WHAT?
WE'VE HAD A DEAL GOING BACK YEARS, JONAH. I TOOK THE PICTURES AND JOHN GOT A CUT OF THE CASH. HOW DO YOU THINK I GOT ALL THOSE EXCLUSIVES? HOW DO YOU THINK I GOT ALL THOSE CLOSE-UP SHOTS?
B-BUT THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE. SPIDER-MAN SAVED JOHN FROM THAT SHUTTLE ACCIDENT. THEY EVEN HAD A COUPLE OF FIGHTS WHEN JOHN-JOHN HAD HIS LITTLE PROBLEM A FEW YEARS BACK.
THAT A FACT?
YOU NEVER READ COMIC BOOKS GROWING UP? YOU NEVER SEE THE STUNTS SUPER HEROES PULL TO TO PROTECT THEIR SECRET IDENTITIES?
WHY ELSE DO YOU THINK SPIDER-MAN'S BEEN PLAYING GAGS ON HIS OLD MAN ALL THESE YEARS? HE'S BEEN DOING EVERYTHING HE COULD TO THROW PEOPLE OFF THE SCENT
OH MY GOD
ARE YOU SURE ABOUT THIS, PARKER?
HE'S USING JOHN'S BATHROOM HERE, JONAH.
BUT WHY WOULDN'T HE TELL ME?
WHO KNOWS? MAYBE HE JUST DIDN'T LIKE WHAT YOU WERE WRITING ABOUT HIM.
EITHER WAY, JOHN ASKED ME NEVER TO TELL YOU ANY OF THIS... WHICH IS WHY I'M GUESSING YOU'LL DO THE DECENT THING AND NEVER ACTUALLY PRINT THESE PICTURES?
OF COURSE. OF COURSE. HOW COULD I PRINT PICTURES OF MY OWN SON? THE COMPETITION'S DEAD AND BURIED, PARKER...


...BUT WHAT ABOUT THE PRIZE MONEY?
EXCUSE ME?
THE FIVE MILLION BUCKS OUR ANONYMOUS DONOR GAVE ME TO FUND THIS LITTLE OFFER. I'M HARDLY GONNA GIVE YOU THE WHOLE FIVE MILLION IF I CAN'T PRINT ANY OF THESE PICTURES
WHAT?
LET'S SAY YOU GET HALF A MILLION AND THE BALANCE RESTS IN A PRIVATE BANK ACCOUNT IN CASE OUR ANONYMOUS DONOR EVER COMES FORWARD.
NATURALLY, I'LL NEED TO TAKE EXPENSES FROM SAID ACCOUNT, COMPENSATION TO HELP ME THROUGH THE TRAUMA OF WHAT I'VE JUST FOUND OUT ABOUT MY OWN FLESH AND BLOOD...
BUT I DON'T WANT HALF A MILLION DOLLARS...
DON'T TRY TO HUSTLE ME, YOU LITTLE CROOK. TEN PERCENT IS WAY TOO GENEROUS FOR PHOTOGRAPHS I'M NEVER GONNA USE. TAKE YOUR MONEY AND GET OUT OF HERE, KID...
...I OBVIOUSLY GOT A LOT OF THINKING TO DO BEFORE I GO HOME TONIGHT

Just keep walking, Peter. Stay cool. Stay cool. You turn down this cash and Jonah's going to see right through you, man. You've got to act like everything's kosher or you blow this thing wide open.
But you can't keep this money. It's a HALF A MILLION DOLLARS, for God's sake.
So what? Whoever donated this cash is probably the same person who murdered Aunt May. He only did this to slowly drive me nuts. I DESERVE a little good luck for a change.
But it doesn't BELONG to you, Peter. You haven't earned it.
What are you talking about? I've been shot, stabbed, electrocuted and run over since this guy started wrecking my life. I've earned this money TEN TIMES OVER.
If you can't give it back you have to give it away, Peter.
Are you INSANE? This could wipe out all those DEBTS Mary Jane rung up. This money could be the answer to all our problems.
But it's not YOUR money, Peter.
JAMESON seemed happy enough.
But it's NOT YOUR MONEY.
Oh God.
FACE IT, Tiger. You were just too WELL-RAISED...
SORRY I'M LATE, PAOLO. MY KID JUST WOULDN'T LET ME OUT THE DOOR TONIGHT. I THINK HE MUSTA CRIED HIMSELF TO SLEEP.

YOU THINK I GIVE A RAT'S BUTT, RAMONA? ALL I KNOW IS I MISSED MY DAMN BUS AND, WHILE I REMEMBER, YOU THINK YOU COULD TELL YOUR BOY MY RESTAURANT AIN'T A *POST-OFFICE BOX?*
WHAT YOU *TALKING* ABOUT, PAOLO? HE'S *FOUR YEARS OLD.*
WELL, SOME GUY JUST LEFT A BIG, HEAVY CASE FOR HIM. I DON'T KNOW WHAT THE HELL'S *IN* THIS THING, BUT I JUST ABOUT BUST A...
SHUT UP, PAOLO.
WHAT?
WHO DID YOU SAY LEFT THIS BEHIND?
I DUNNO. SOME GUY WITH BROWN HAIR AND A BROWN JACKET SAID AN OLD MAN CALLED *ADRIAN* ASKED HIM TO DROP THIS OFF.
NAME *MEAN* ANYTHING TO YOU?
Parker, you must be just about the biggest softie in the world. Can you imagine *THE PUNISHER* doing this for one of his bad guys?

Two days after the incident, Mary Jane and I are asked to give a statement about Venom injuring all my classmates and murdering poor Seymour O'Reilly.
All the time we're talking, I'm thinking how PATHETIC this is and how I've had to lie through my teeth since the moment I first sewed this MASK together.
SORRY. THOUGHT I HAD MY CELL PHONE SWITCHED OFF.
As soon as I find Aunt May's killer, this stupid costume is going in the trash and STAYING there this time.
HELLO?
SORRY, IT'S HIS AUNT. SHE'S REALLY OLD AND SHE'S ALWAYS CALLING TO SEE IF HE CAN DO STUFF FOR HER.
HELLO, PETER. THAT WAS AN INTERESTING WAY TO SPEND YOUR SHARE OF THE MONEY I GAVE TO JAMESON. BUT WHAT ABOUT EDDIE BROCK?
IT'S ALWAYS A SHAME TO LOSE A COLLEAGUE LIKE THAT, BUT HE JUST DIDN'T FIT IN WITH THE PLANS WE HAVE FOR YOUR NEW AND IMPROVED ROGUES GALLERY.
WHAT? IS THIS YOU?
I'M GOING TO KILL YOU FOR THIS. DO YOU UNDERSTAND ME? I'M GOING TO HUNT YOU DOWN AND KILL YOU FOR MURDERING MY AUNT MAY.
WELL, LET'S NOT GET AHEAD OF OURSELVES, SHALL WE? THERE'S A LOT OF PEOPLE INVOLVED IN THIS SITUATION, PETER, AND TO TELL YOU THE TRUTH YOU'VE JUST SEEN THE TIP OF THE ICEBERG SO FAR.
WHAT WERE THOSE COPS DOING WITH OTTO OCTAVIUS? WHY IS OSBORN IN SUCH TERRIBLE DANGER? WHY HAS DEAR OLD AUNT MAY BEEN INTEGRAL TO ALL MY PLANS?


MEET ME FOR *LUNCH* TOMORROW AND I'LL GIVE YOU THE WHOLE STORY.
CIAO FOR NOW.
STARTING NEXT MONTH:
THE LAST STAND!